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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0656  
INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE 1044  
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE 6196  
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SUBJECT: UNSC MINURSO CONSULTATIONS: ON TRACK FOR SIX-MONTH  
ROLLOVER

¶1. Summary: DPKO Assistant Secretary-General Hedi Annabi and the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara Peter van Walsum summarized for the Security Council October 25 the UN's latest assessment of the situation in the Western Sahara. Speaking for the United States, Ambassador Sanders expressed support for the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend MINURSO for another six months, while cautioning that "continuation is tied to progress" and that negotiations ought to be conducted in "the spirit of flexibility." The majority of Council members also expressed support for a six-month extension, although several cited the need for dialogue between the parties and the imperative of self-determination for the Sahwari, and many expressed concern about the human rights situation in Western Sahara. End Summary.

¶2. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Assistant Secretary-General Hedi Annabi highlighted three aspects of

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the most recent "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara" (Document S/2006/817 available at [www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep06](http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep06)): the limited access to Moroccan and Polisario military bases available to the MINURSO military observers; alleged human rights abuses; and the need for continued implementation of confidence building measures. The Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara Peter van Walsum spoke only to reiterate that the UN position on Western Sahara remained as he had described it earlier in the year: one of passive encouragement. He characterized the UN as taking a "step back" so as to allow the parties to carry out their responsibilities. He emphasized UN support for the attainment of a mutually acceptable political solution vice a continuation of the status quo, which he deemed unacceptable.

¶3. Council members generally supported the Secretary-General's report and most indicated they would

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support a six-month rollover of the MINURSO mandate. But Council members, in their statements, also underlined their concerns on a number of issues. A number of countries, reflecting their reading of a leaked OHCHR report critical of Morocco, said that the UN should continue close monitoring of the human rights situation in Western Sahara (Qatar, Ghana, Argentina, Denmark, Greece, Peru, France, Slovakia and Congo). Several countries reminded the Council of the importance of the principle of self-determination for the people of Western Sahara (Argentina, Denmark, Peru, Tanzania and Slovakia). Several countries also urged that unconditional dialogue begin between the parties (China,

Argentina, Denmark, Greece, Tanzania and UK). Finally, a number of countries urged an expanded program of confidence building measures (Argentina, Denmark, Peru and France).

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